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Yes and no. It is influenced in a high degree by classical study—that is, by Renaissance study.

The array of salvers and “pitchers” (to use an Americanism) takes us through quite a range of historical study. Some are of the French Renaissance, some seventeenth-century Bourbon, some are English, some German and Dutch more or less modern, but each one is well marked by the character of some period. They open up other lines of history and other conditions, too extensive for the limits of this article.

JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON.

(*To be continued.*)



SOLDIER MONUMENTS.

OF all the silly, stiff, thick-jointed, graceless goddesses of victory, Illinois' goddess is the worst.

Of all the wry-necked, insignificant, imbecile, weakling manikins, those representing Illinois' soldiers are the most contemptible.

They stand now, lamentable metal objects, just outside of the bronze foundry in sight and scorn of every passer-by. They are shortly to stand on the battlefield of Missionary Ridge in memory of the gallant Illinoisans who fell there.

A goddess with one leg shorter than the other, and no bone in either of them; a goddess with arms of disproportionate length; with a meaningless countenance; nose and forehead overhanging her weak chin as the projecting upper stories of old houses overhang the lower in quaint English streets—not just the kind of architecture one admires in a woman's face. A goddess on whose ridiculous form a burlesque of Grecian drapery hangs as dejectedly as rags upon a scarecrow!

Forever and forever is she to perch on a granite column, tendering a laurel wreath with one absurd long arm and holding aloft an olive branch with the other, twisted backward in defiance of anatomy. Forever and forever will she watch over our heroes' graves with stupid eyes, exaggeratedly large, and prim, curled-up lips exaggeratedly small—the English fashion-plate type of beauty.

Four bronze soldiers will guard the base of her column—cavalryman, infantryman, artilleryman and color-bearer—each one an insult to that image which God is said to have made after His own, and pronounced good. Meeting any such hapless caricature of humanity on the street you would say, “What a pity that he was ever allowed to grow up from rickety infancy to adult idiocy.” The poor invertebrate, unmuscle-

creatures have arms and legs like sausages, clad in misfit uniforms. The modeler apparently knew that cloth makes folds and wrinkles, but he had not grasped the fact that these folds and wrinkles are caused by the action of the body underneath. He has made a lumpy, uneven surface, hollows here and hills there.

Such are the memorials we put up to honor the men who died for the Union. The very workmen who cast them laugh at them. Some day the Illinois Central trains, running within a dozen yards, will shy at them and tumble over the embankment.

Yet we boast with St. Paul and Rudyard Kipling that we are citizens of "no mean city." Nor is this great Chicago a mean city; nor is this imperial State of Illinois an unimportant commonwealth. The State appropriated \$18,000 for the Missionary Ridge monument. The Governor appointed a commission to take charge of it — a commission of ten well-meaning G. A. R. veterans, who had probably never seen a statue better than the lambs and angels of a country cemetery, and who could not name four distinguished American sculptors if their lives depended on it. They did not deal with artists. They selected a commonplace design made by a draftsman for a stone contractor. Now, the civilized world generally understands by a monument a noble statue with pedestal and surroundings calculated to set it off. What a stone contractor understands by a monument is as much stone as there is money to pay for, with "figures" filling up any odd spaces. The usual thing is a high column, the higher the better, and a base built up of fancy blocks and gingerbread ornaments, about on a level, architecturally, with the block-building of the nursery. Around this base they scatter a few superfluous "figures," and they set another on top of the shaft. It can hardly be seen there, which, on the whole, is fortunate.

In this particular instance, Col. J. S. Culver, of the Culver Stone Company, captured the commission. He is an old hand at these matters and knows exactly what arguments carry most weight. He received the contract for the entire monument, stonework, "figures," bronze-casting and all, and proceeded to farm out his contracts. Naturally the lowest bidder had the best chance of getting a job from him.

The average person with \$18,000 to lay out on a public monument might consider \$15,000 enough to set aside for pedestal, masonry, cutting, casting and setting up. Three thousand dollars would not appear overmuch to allot to a sculptor for a statue that should be the beautiful and expressive part of the whole. St. Gaudens or Daniel French might not undertake it at that price, but an artist of talent and reputation could be secured. In the case of this Missionary Ridge monument one sculptor actually bid as low as \$1,500.

But why waste money on a man trained in the art schools of Europe and America?—a stonecutter's apprentice will do it for half that amount. At some railroad hotel in St. Louis Colonel Culver picked up an illiterate German. He may never have seen the inside of an art school or a gallery of sculpture. That did not matter. In the colonel's judgment he was qualified to model five statues of more than life size that should be worthy of commemorating the memory of the soldiers of Illinois.

The price agreed upon is said to be \$800. A professional sculptor would spend that much on living expenses, studio rent and model hire during the time it would take him to properly accomplish his task. This man used no models, and the result—well, the result must be seen to be believed. Poor Columbus, who was actually hooted from his position on the lake front and lies neglected in a Jackson Park shed, was infinitely superior to these "figures." Beside them there stand on the wooden platform two statues of the late Senator English of Indiana. They were ordered before his death, but apparently the heirs do not like them well enough to take them away; yet they are of godlike dignity compared to the laughable puppets that Illinois is to have.

One need not be an artist or a critic to see their defects. The very workmen who cast them jeered at them. The head molder, a quick-tempered, art-loving Frenchman, never passed them by but he threw his hammer at them. Even the committee had its doubts. One man refused to have anything more to do with them; the others tried to get their creator to doctor up the awful things. You cannot doctor up what is cast in bronze, but this man tried it. When he wanted a soldier to grasp a gun or reach for a sword he simply bent the limb or stretched it out to fit his plan. Never mind if he made the bend where solid, unjointed bone should be. Never mind if he stretched it out as one might stretch chewing gum.

A little bird saw the troubled committee actually measuring the fingers and toes and heads of these lamentable bronze failures. Some of them seem to have crammed up on a few rules of proportion. The little bird roared with laughter when he heard the curious points of female beauty that were brought forward.

They had one consolation. The nine-foot female dispensing peace or victory or something in the form of wreaths would be too high up from the ground to be clearly seen. And what could they do? They have signed a contract with Culver, and the gallant colonel is now at Tampa waiting for a call to the front.

This is the culmination of all the shocking monumental art that disgraces our country. We already have legions of pieces of a dead level of mediocrity. This one has gone even below that level. An intelligent

foreigner once remarked innocently : " Why, this is the same monument I saw in Manchester. I also saw it in Oshkosh. Very curious." " Curiouser and curiouser," as Alice in Wonderland says, he would have found that identical statue in hundreds of other towns.

Seventy-five per cent of the soldiers' monuments in the United States are the everlasting infantryman at parade rest ; fifty per cent of them are made from the same model. They are turned out in quantities like shoes or umbrellas. A state of affairs absolutely incomprehensible to foreigners. The same intelligent foreigner asked who selected our public monuments. He was told a committee of old soldiers generally performed that task. He looked puzzled, as well he might, whereat the prominent sculptor to whom he was talking, added : " We generally appoint a committee of painters and sculptors to manage our military operations." And the intelligent foreigner exploded with laughter. He had heard of American humor, and he knew that it consisted partly in practicing on the credulity of strangers. Both of these statements were evidently huge jokes.

A few more things could have been told him that sound like jokes. Nearly all our monuments represent the enlightened taste of the granite company. The more taste they have the more granite they use. They may do without sculpture or buy it where it is to be had cheapest, but granite is indispensable. For the Tennessee State monument on this same battlefield of Chickamauga, the sculpture was done from German models, but the stone is real native Tennessee granite. Trust the patriotic granite companies for that. And rarely, rarely does it occur to them that granite might be used artistically. It might make circular seats or exedras or architectural surroundings, but an architect would be required to plan these, whereas any draftsman can turn out columns and variegated bases.

Agents for granite companies simply haunt a committee with a monument on its hands. They exhibit highly finished water-color drawings of expensive stonework, with bright blue sky behind it, bright green grass beneath it, admiring crowds walking about it, saying " A-a-a-h ! " Sometimes they photograph the proposed locality, and work it into the background. And they shower drinks and lunches and entertainments upon the committee. And they talk art and literature as if they were high priests of Apollo.

Call this, if you choose, legitimate business enterprise on the part of the granite drummers. What is it on the part of the monument committee that yields to such methods? Carelessness? Indifference? Crass ignorance? The latter generally. They do not know that what gives a monument value is its beauty, not the mere weight and cost of stone or metal tastelessly put together. They do not know that good workmanship is needed rather than raw material ; that an artist rather than a stone-

cutter should be consulted. Or, if they are aware of this, they are conceited enough to believe themselves capable of judging what is artistic without any previous training in that line.

Each man of them has probably spent years in learning his own business, yet ignores the fact that every artist worth considering must also spend years in learning his — generally three or four in some American art school and as many more in Europe. He has to study anatomy, history, costume, composition, as well as the actual handling of the medium he uses. This kind of knowledge does not come by nature, and it is not true that any intelligent man can select a statue. The merchant would not allow the able electrician to lay in his stock of dress goods; the lawyer would snap his fingers at the successful merchant's opinion on legal points; the dentist would not take the lawyer's advice on filling teeth; no, nor the old soldier's either. Yet it is the choice of merchants, lawyers, farmers, dentists and old soldiers that dictates those blots on the landscape we call State monuments.

After all, it is our whole unreasonable system that is at fault. Not merely the greedy contractor, who does after his kind, nor the frequently conscientious, if unwise, committees, but our absurd method of appointing a committee not especially qualified for the task it has to do. If it is absolutely necessary that monument committees should be composed of G. A. R. veterans or men who have won prominence for other than artistic reasons, we should have a public art commission to advise with them and preserve them from such fatal blunders as the Missionary Ridge monument. Washington, New York and Boston have already such commissions. Illinois is not lacking in men of culture and men of public spirit fit to form one here. Among its members should be the heads of the art departments of our universities, the president and director of our art museum, with, say, three members of the Illinois Chapter of Architects, three sculptors and three painters, selected from those who are residents of the State and yet whose work has been approved by other than local juries of artists. Is it too much to hope for such a thing?

ISABEL MCDUGALL.

From the *Chicago Evening Post*, Saturday, July 16, 1898.